

November 7, 2019

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Wheeler,

I am writing to formally express my concern with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking on the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) program regarding Renewable Volume Obligations (RVO) for 2020, including the biomass-based diesel volume for 2021 issued on October 28, 2019 (Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2019-0136).

Agriculture is Missouri's largest industry which contributes \$88 billion to the local economy and employs nearly 400,000 people across the state. There are six ethanol plants in Missouri that produce nearly 300 million gallons of ethanol annually. Also, Missouri is the second largest state nationwide with regard to biodiesel production.

This year has been extremely challenging for farm families back in Missouri. Catastrophic flooding, ongoing trade disputes, and now EPA's failure to uphold its commitment to rural America and implement the RFS in a manner that is consistent with statutory biofuel volume obligations only further hurts growers in Missouri who are already experiencing a struggling farm economy.

While I welcomed the initial announcement from the White House, EPA, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on October 4, 2019, many understood that agreement as a commitment to promote domestic ethanol and biodiesel production. I stated then that I am committed to working with the Administration to ensure that the plan outlined in that agreement is implemented in a manner consistent with upholding the 15 billion gallon RFS for ethanol, corrects past administrative actions, and supports the biofuels industry and rural America.

The supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking falls short of the original intent of that agreement because it fails to provide more certainty and accuracy in the accounting for waived biofuel volumes. The EPA's proposed rule relies on an inaccurate three-year averaging of the Department of Energy's (DOE) small refinery exemption recommendations instead of using the actual amount of gallons waived by the EPA. The DOE recommendations are not truly representative of the damage inflicted on the biofuels industry.

I have long been an advocate for the biofuels industry. Renewable energy policies like the RFS have helped facilitate the diversification of our nation's fuel supply while also creating and sustaining jobs, strengthening local economies, generating tax revenue, improving energy security, and lowering gas prices. I trust that the Administration will take the necessary and corrective action to produce a final rule that takes into account the concerns that myself and others within the biofuels industry share.

Sincere regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Roy Blunt", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Roy Blunt
United States Senator